millers. Hence, no targets are fixed for procurement of rice.

There is no decline in the production of rice in 1996-97 crop year. The procurement of rice for the Central Pool during 1996-97 Marketing Season is progressing satisfactorily and has reached 120.38 lakh tonnes as on 21.7.97 as compared to 98.59 lakh tonnes upto the same date last year.

Government has permitted import of common/coarse varieties of rice and rice with 50% or more brokens freely with a view to augmenting its availability in the country to meet the needs of the common consumers with limited purchasing power. This permission has been given with effect from 27.5.97.

It is difficult to assess the quantity that is likely to be imported by various agencies in the public/private sector. Therefore the impact on domestic prices cannot be predicted.

FCI's Storage Capacity of Foodgrains in Gujarat

489. SHRI AHMED PATEL: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Food Corporation of India (FCI) has created storage capacity to maintain the minimum buffer stock of foodgrains in the State of Gujarat;

(b) if so, the details of the buffer stock prescribed for the State and the present storage capacity thereof;

(c) whether Government propose to increase the buffer stock as well as storage capacity for Gujarat; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI RAGHUBANSH PRASAD SINGH): (a) to (d) As on 31.5.1997, the Food Corporation of India is having storage capacity of 9.82 lakh tonnes in Gujarat State. This capacity is considered to be sufficient keeping in view the present level of allocations under TPDS and other Government schemes. There are no State-wise buffer stocking norms.

Rice Sent to Manipur by FCI Misappropriated on the way

490. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether rice worth several crores of rupees scheduled to be sent to Manipur by FCI through certain parties in Haryana was misappropriated on the way and was not delivered; and

(b) if so, the details of the irregularities and action taken against officials and non-officials involved in the scandal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI RAGHUBANSH PRASAD SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir. The two transport contractors appointed for transportation of foodgrains from Haryana to Imphal (Manipur) had not delivered 4368 MT and 1543 MT of rice valuing about Rs. 4.25 crores.

(b) Two parties namely M/s. Gautam Associates, Mohali and M/s Yazen Ayier & Co., Pehowa, who were appointed as transport contractors for transportation of foodgrains from Haryana to Imphal had not delivered the above mentioned quantities of rice. On the basis of preliminary investigations 6 Astt. Managers and one District Manager have been placed under suspension. FIR has also been lodged against the defaulting contractors for misappropriation of foodgrains. The Government has approved the proposal of the Food Corporation of India to refer the case for detailed investigation by the Central Bureau of Investigation and FCI has taken action accordingly.

नई सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली के कार्यान्वयन हेतु राज्यों की सहमति

491. श्री दिलीप सिंह जूदेवः क्या खाद्य और उपभोक्ता मामले मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे किः

(क) किन-किन राज्यों ने गरीबों को आधे दाम पर अनाज उपलब्ध कराने की योजना को कार्यान्वित करने के संबंध में सहमति जताई है तथा वे इस योजना को कब तक कार्यान्वित कर देंगे;